

## **Vaccine Refrigerator/Freezer Requirements**

All providers must be able to meet the following requirements in order to participate in the Vermont Department of Health's Vaccines for Children (VFC) or Vaccines for Adults (VFA) program:

### **Vaccine Storage Equipment**

**Providers must have adequate equipment that can store vaccine and maintain proper conditions.**

**Two types of storage units are acceptable:**

- **A refrigerator with a separate freezer compartment and separate exterior doors**
- **Stand-alone refrigerators and freezers**

**Refrigerators or freezers used for vaccine storage must comply with the following requirements:**

- **Maintain temperature adequate to store vaccine at required temperature year-round**
- **Be large enough to hold the year's largest inventory**
- **Have a working thermometer certified in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) or the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards placed in a central area inside each storage compartment (VDH will provide)**
- **Be dedicated to the storage of vaccines--Food and beverages must not be stored in a vaccine storage unit because this practice results in frequent opening of the door and temperature fluctuations.**

### **Vaccine Storage Practices**

- The vaccine storage practices listed below can be assigned to the office vaccine coordinator. The vaccine coordinator should monitor the activity periodically when it is delegated to others.
- Rotate vaccine stock by placing vaccine with shorter expiration dates in front of those with longer expiration dates; check for short-dated vaccine.
- Notify the immunization program of any vaccine doses that will expire before they can be administered. Redistribute short-dated vaccines to high-volume providers who are able to administer it before it expires *only with the approval and direct guidance* of the immunization program and *only if the cold chain can be ensured*.
- Place vaccine centrally, allowing for cold air circulation around the vaccine.
- Store refrigerated vaccines in the middle of the refrigerator compartment away from the coils, walls, floor, and cold air vent.
- Store frozen vaccines in the middle of the freezer compartment, away from the walls, coils, and peripheral areas.
- Do not store vaccines in the door of the storage unit.

### **Temperature Monitoring**

Temperature monitoring is primarily the responsibility of the vaccine coordinator and backup. If other staff must monitor temperatures, those persons must be taught what to do when temperature is outside the appropriate range and to document the actions taken.

*The above text is an abbreviated excerpt from CDC VFC Operations Guide, Module 6 pages 6-9*

*Guide M-6 Vaccine Management 7Publication Date: August 2007 Revision Date: None*

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/downloads/vfc-op-guide/10-module-6.pdf>

**Vermont Department of Health provides NIST certified thermometers and temperature logs free of charge to enrolled practices**

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